

Attachment 15 – IRWM Plan – Reduce Delta Water Dependence

Does the IRWM region receive water supplied from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta?

Yes. Since the adoption of the original Plan, the IRWM region has expanded to include James Irrigation District which receives water from the CVP's via the Mendota Pool. Contractual entitlement to 35,300 acre-feet of CVP water via a long-term water service contract subject to CVP agricultural water shortages.

In addition, the City of Fresno and Fresno Irrigation District hold CVP contracts for water from the San Joaquin River through the Friant Kern Canal. With the proposed settlement of the San Joaquin River requiring flows to re-establish a fishery along the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the Delta system. The re-establishment of these flows will require Friant CVP contractors to provide water supply to maintain these flows, particularly in dry years. This will reduce the overall allocation of water supply made available to the City of Fresno and FID, requiring these entities to secure or develop alternative supplies to meet existing demands.

Does the existing IRWM Plan help reduce dependence on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for water supply?

Yes. This application is based on the Upper Kings Basin IRWMP adopted July 2007, prior to September 30, 2008. In accordance with the PSP, a copy of the existing IRWMP was not required with this application, but a copy of the existing IRWMP is available on the Authority's website, http://krwd.org/water/ukbirwma/docs_gov.html. This IRWMP and the region were approved during DWR's 2009 Regional Acceptance Process.

The existing IRWMP sets goals and objectives (Section 5.3) to help protect, preserve, and sustain the region's existing water supply thereby reducing the region's need to pursue and compete for water supplies outside of the region. Further, the IRWMP includes several projects and proposed methods for development of water supplies that could ultimately be made available to some of the South of Delta contractors that are affected by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta issues. The region has worked with some of these contractors in the past, particularly those that are within the Tulare Lake Hydrologic region on the western side of valley counties.

The region is located within the CALFED Solution Area and will assist in meeting the following CALFED Bay-Delta Program Goals of reducing the mismatch between Bay-Delta water supplies and current and projected beneficial uses dependant on the Bay-Delta system. Groundwater Banking projects within the Authority, including the one proposed with this application, have the potential to provide beneficial impacts to the Sacramento-San Joaquin system.

The IRWMP and the projects proposed in the IRWMP and this application have many benefits

that are consistent with CALFED Objectives, including:

- **Water Management.** CALFED's water management program seeks to maximize the use of water supplies through conservation, water recycling and water quality improvements; increase operational flexibility through strategic improvements in conveyance and storage facilities; and develop groundwater and storage facilities. The IRWMP and this application include projects that maximize the use of the existing supplies.
- **Off-Stream Surface Storage.** The IRWMP encourages and includes several off-stream storage facilities. The region's surface water purveyors and flood management groups currently maintain an extensive network of basins
- **Groundwater Storage.** Increased groundwater storage is central to the IRWMP plan objectives and projects, as well as several projects in this proposal. The primary purpose of the application is to seek funding for additional groundwater recharge facilities or conservation measures to halt and correct the overdraft.
- **Water Use Efficiency.** The Authority members and Interested Parties actively promote agricultural and urban water use efficiency programs and have developed Best Management Practices in accordance with the Ag and Urban Water Management Councils.
- **Water Transfers and the Environmental Water Account.** Although the region has not participated in the EWA, the development of groundwater banking facilities may allow project partners to participate in the future.
- **Ecosystem Restoration.** CALFED is primarily concerned with the health of the Bay-Delta System. The proposed project will help reduce pressure on the Bay-Delta in dry years. The additional water supplies developed through the IRWMP efforts will also work to offset the supply now required for diversion from the San Joaquin River. In addition, the IRWMP is also working on local ecosystem restoration. The Kings River Fisheries Program has been in operation for more than a decade, and the IRWMP seeks to further that effort. Banking facilities such as the one proposed will help to maintain supplies for the program while meeting current demands.

The direct benefits of the proposed projects in this application on the Bay-Delta are summarized as follows:

- The Project provides off-stream and groundwater storage which will increase

operational flexibility and reduce demands on supplies of supplemental water from the Delta in dry years.

- The Project would preserve and improve groundwater quality south of the Delta that may be used to meet future agricultural and urban demands.
- By reducing Delta-dependent water demands in dry years, water may be used for other critical uses in those years including the provision of water quality benefits and ecosystem benefits.
- By providing additional recharge south of the Delta, the proposed Project could provide a marginal increase of Delta exports during flood periods providing some small assistance for the protection of levees.

If an update to the plan takes place in the near future, will the updated plan continue to reduce dependence on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for water supply?

Yes. The Authority recently submitted and has been tentatively selected for an IRWM Planning Grant. In that application, a proposed Table of Contents was included for the proposed update of the IRWMP to meet the new Guidelines. The IRWMP update is scheduled to be completed in 2011. In the update, current Chapters 5, 6 and 9 will likely be combined and updated into a new Chapter 5 – Goals and Objectives. Within that chapter, it is planned to include a section on the IRWMP Program Preferences and Statewide Objectives. Since one of the IRWM Program Preferences is to “Contribute to attainment of one or more of the objectives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program”, the update to the plan will address the region’s connection to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta water supply.